

# Harford County Commission on Disabilities

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# Meeting Minutes

## June 27, 2005

## Attendance:

Members Present:

Debbie Braam  
Bob Coen  
Gil Kennedy  
Joan Loftus  
Laurie Kwiedorowicz  
Rhia Perry  
Carol Roughton

Members Absent:

Susan Austin  
Angela Barnett  
Buddy Green  
Councilman Dion Guthrie  
Stacey Hull  
Keith Lewis  
Marc Weinstein

- I. Vice-chairperson Laurie Kwiedorowicz called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
- II. Minutes: The minutes of the May 23, 2005 Commission meeting were approved with correction.
- III. Committee Reports:
  - A. Executive Committee: Membership:
    1. One application for Commission membership has been received. The Commission voted to recommend Kathy Halliday of the Division of Rehabilitation Services to the County Executive as a member representing an agency.

*Striving for a Better Way of Life for Harford County Citizens with Disabilities*



2. No applications have been received for the student representative for the 2005/06 School Year. Information for a follow-up press release will be developed to include quotes from the Chairperson and from the current Student Representative.

B. Accessibility Committee:

1. Ramps for Homeowners and Renters Program: Applications for ramps still being accepted. A meeting with Housing Agency representatives to discuss the status of the program originally scheduled for June 30, 2005 is being re-scheduled. Gil Kennedy and Sharon Grzanka will report on the meeting at the August Commission meeting.
2. Housing: Gil Kennedy and Sharon Grzanka attended the first meeting of the Housing Coalition of Harford County on June 8<sup>th</sup>. The coalition, which is being spearheaded by the Harford Habitat for Humanity, will include representative of local housing providers, government agencies, faith communities, etc. The next meeting is scheduled for June 30<sup>th</sup>, at noon, in McComas Hall, Bel Air United Methodist Church. All interested citizens are welcome.

C. Education Committee: Committee Chairperson Debbie Braam reported that the first Expo 2006 planning meeting was held on June 1, 2005. The committee explored some changes in format to make the Expo more like a professional conference. They also reviewed the Expo vendor mailing list for additions, corrections, or deletions. Commission members who would like to suggest agencies and organizations to be added to the list are asked to submit contact information to Debbie or Sharon.

D. Government and Community Relations Committee:

1. Legislative Committee: No new information.
2. Commission web page:
  - a. Bob Coen reported that Volunteers for Medical Engineering, Inc. is now featured in "Spotlight on

Services” at

<http://www.co.ha.md.us/services/disabilities/> . This new feature provides a brief description and contact information on local service providers.

- b. Bob also reported that the monthly “hit report”, which tracked web page visits, is no longer available. Bob added that Harford County webmaster, Cheryl Landreth, suggested that the Commission consider the key words that would result in search engine referrals to the web page. Sharon will follow-up with Cheryl on this issue.
- c. Bob distributed a list of housing information web sites, which is attached. He also distributed a copy of the home page of [www.newmobility.com](http://www.newmobility.com) , the website of the Spinal Network. Bob will share information on disability-related websites at future meetings.

#### IV. Disabilities Coordinator Report:

- A. Disabled Dealer Magazine’s July 2005 issue, [www.disableddealer.com](http://www.disableddealer.com), featured an article on universal (accessible) playgrounds.
- B. The U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, has published “Customers with Disabilities Mean Business”, which provides the following statistics: “The large and growing market of people with disabilities has \$175 billion in discretionary spending, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. \$175 billion is almost two times the spending power of teens and more that 17 time the spending power of tweens (8-12 year-olds), two demographics sought after businesses.” For more information, visit the Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Business Connection at [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov) or call the toll-free ADA Information Line: 800-514-0301/voice or 800-514-0383/TTY.

#### V. Old Business:

- A. Transportation Steering Committee:
  - 1. Cheryl Gable, Harford County’s new Mobility Trainer/Coordinator, has taught six individuals with disabilities to

use Harford Transit to get to work. Sharon will invite Cheryl to the September Commission meeting. Cheryl can be contacted at 410-638-3389 voice/TTY or via email at [clgable@co.ha.md.us](mailto:clgable@co.ha.md.us) .

2. Sharon Grzanka made a presentation on the transportation coordination effort in Harford County to the Washington County Transportation Steering Committee in Hagerstown on May 25, 2005.
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- B. 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act: Debbie Braam reported that the event will take place on Monday, July 25, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. at the Mc Faul Center, 525 West MacPhail Road, Bel Air. Secretary Kristen Cox, of the Maryland Department of Disabilities has been invited to be the guest speaker. Secretary Cox is on maternity leave so her attendance is not yet confirmed. Invitations have been sent to Commission members, interested citizens, County officials, and agency representatives. See Debbie or Sharon for additional invitations.
  - C. Mentors for children with disabilities: Sharon distributed copies of the letter student representative Rhia Perry sent, on behalf of the Commission, to the Editor of the Aegis regarding the Kids C.A.N. program's need for mentors for children with disabilities.
  - D. Carol Roughton's retirement: Vice-chairperson Laurie Kwiedorowicz presented Carol Roughton a silver box engraved with the dates of her Commission membership, 1995-2005. The Commission extends sincere appreciation for Carol's work on behalf of individuals with disabilities in Harford County and best wishes for a happy and rewarding retirement in North Carolina.



Outgoing Commissioner Carol Roughton at festivities in her honor at the June 27, 2005 Commission on Disabilities meeting.

## VI. New Business:

### A. Emergency Preparedness

1. The Department of Community services, in cooperation with the American Red Cross, is conducting Mass Care Sheltering Training. A session for the general public will be presented in September. Beth Hendrix, Deputy Director of Community Services has invited Commission members to attend the session. Sharon will provide date, time, and location at the August meeting. Sharon also distributed an article from the Baltimore Sun about a recent emergency preparedness exercise in Carroll County.
2. Doug Richmond, the Deputy Manager of Harford County Emergency Operations, has invited a member of the Commission to join the Emergency Exercise Planning Committee. More to follow.

## VII. Announcements and Public Comment:

- A. Pete Raimondi updated the Commission on his advocacy efforts with regard to battery operated shopping carts in shopping malls. Mr. Raimondi reported that he spoke at recent meetings of the Howard County and Anne Arundel County Commissions on Disability.

VIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m. The next meeting of the Commission will be held on Monday, August 22, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. at the historic "Bel Air Colored High School".

*These minutes are available in alternative format upon request.*

### **Bob Coen's Web Site Report**

Karen Friedman of the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) provided the following sites.

This site is for Multifamily Inventory of Units for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/hto/state/md.pdf>

The site is for a Subsidized Apartment Search:

<http://www.hud.gov/apps/section8/step2.cfm?state=MD%2CMaryland>

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development also has an affordable/accessable housing registry at:

<http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/Website/programs/aahr/aahr.aspx>

Here are two websites that search for apartments, the first has accessible apartments, and the second is mainly an affordable housing website.

[http://www.naahq.org/naac/naac\\_search.htm](http://www.naahq.org/naac/naac_search.htm)

<http://www.affordablehousingonline.com/default.asp>

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) created this page as a one-stop resource for People with Disabilities. They have pulled together a directory of links from our site as well as outside sites to assist you.

<http://www.hud.gov/groups/disabilities.cfm>

This site does not site MDOD, so it's old but still has some useable information. Marylanders with disabilities often have a difficult time finding a suitable place to live. There are a variety of reasons for this, ranging from [discrimination](#) to a lack of accessible housing designs. If you or someone you love is disabled, the resources below will help you find the right apartment, independent living center, or single family home. If you need more help, contact the Governor's Office for Individuals with Disabilities at 410-333-3098 or 1-800-637-4113.

<http://www.peoples-law.org/housing/home-ownership/disabled-home.htm>

This site helps define what is an accessible home. An accessible home is one, which enables an individual to do what he or she needs, and desires to do as independently as possible.

[http://www.handinet.org/icg\\_hous.htm](http://www.handinet.org/icg_hous.htm)

This is a site run by the state of Kansas. The goal is to provide a current and comprehensive annotated directory of resources for the Disabled community. Links are listed alphabetically. Although the main focus of this site is Disabilities, these resources will also include some Medical and Health links.

<http://www.kansas.net/~cbaslock/housing.html>

The Transverse Myelitis Association sponsors this site. Transverse Myelitis Association is a registered not-for-profit organization dedicated to support, education and research for a cure to the neurological condition of Transverse Myelitis.

<http://www.makoa.org/accessible-design.htm>

This site has lots of links to devices to make a home more accessible for the disabled. Travis, the site designer was injured in an auto accident in 1990.

<http://www.turtlehomes.com/links.html>

Future Home's mission is serving people with disabilities, their families, and professionals interested in some of today's technological solutions to living

with severe disabilities. Future Home is located on Jarrettsville Pike, Phoenix, Maryland adjacent to the Lock Raven Reservoir.

<http://www.thefuturehome.net/>

Accessibility Design is a company that designs, consults, manages projects and products that specialize in residential environments for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

<http://www.accessibilitydesign.com/>